

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND,

(A BRITISH COLONY),

SITUATE off the north-west coast of North America, between 48° and 51° N. Lat. and 123° and 129° W. Long.

Length, 275 miles—Breadth, 25 to 75 miles.

Superficial area, about 16,000 square miles.

Harbours numerous—that of Esquimalt the most important, and is a magnificent one in all respects—no good harbour for 800 miles south of Vancouver.

MOUNTAINS, a chain near the coast and covered with pine forests through its whole length, highest about 2000 feet.

Interior, varied with fertile plains, lakes and streams (generally small), grass or fern covered plains, rocky ground, and park-like oak-land.

Rivers—none navigable, but deep arms of the sea indent the coast, these vary from 50 to 120 miles in length, and are from 1 to 5 miles wide. Roads to the interior have been commenced this year.

Proximate population—

White Males	5000
White Females	700
Coloured People ..	500
Indians	10,000 to 15,000

The Aborigines are submissive, peaceable and useful—they fish, trap, carry, boat and work for the Whites, when so inclined. They are divided into small tribes jealous of each other, and their villages are on the coast, fish and potatoes being their staple food.

Soil—rich in places but generally light, the latter is productive of fair crops.

CLIMATE—very similar to that of England, a little warmer in the summer, and a little wetter in the winter—much less fog—exceedingly salubrious—usual length of winter, from two to three months, snow seldom remains a week. Thermometer rarely above 80° in summer—the nights are always cool—5 degrees above zero has been known, but the mercury seldom falls below 15 degrees above zero during the five or ten cold days of winter. On the whole, the climate is more salubrious, invigorating and agreeable than that of England.

DISEASES—None peculiar to the country—epidemics, seldom and mild—small-pox has been confined to Indians.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS—all such cereals, fruits, vegetables and roots as thrive in England. Wheat sown in October,

February and March yields 36 bushels to the acre, average weight 64 lbs. Barley, Oats and Peas sown in February and March—Barley, 56 bush., weight, 54 lbs.—Oats, 50 bush., Weight, 40 lbs. Harvest in July and August. Potatoes very superior—have been known to yield 600 bush., and Oats, 72 bush. an acre. A Fruit Orchard matures in three years. Turnips of 50 lbs., Cabbages of 60 lbs., Pumpkins of 150 lbs weight, and other vegetables proportionally large are produced; Tomatoes, Melons, Cucumbers and Maize come to perfection in the open air.

MINERALS—interior but slightly explored—found, gold, silver with arsenic, rich copper and iron ore, coal abundant near the surface, excellent sand stone, plumbago, lime stone, marble white and black in blocks of any size, cement stone and roofing slate. The coal of Nanaimo is similar to Newcastle. Extensively used for steam, house and gas purposes; it is the best found on that coast, and its deposit is considered inexhaustible. The coal seams of Nanaimo are the only ones worked, and they rudely. A little sand stone and lime stone are used for local buildings. Copper Mining Companies are being formed. Magnetic Iron ore containing 60 to 70 per cent. of metal, with a small quantity of copper is abundant, and near water, coal and wood—it is not worked. All iron is imported from England and the States. No iron has been found on the North Pacific coast but in Vancouver.

Three or four feet of soil around Victoria covers clay suitable for bricks, below this are beds of white and blue clay equal to any in England, 20 to 60 feet thick, suitable for the finest crockery; the brick clay only is worked, from want of capital and skilled labour.

TREES—Douglas, pine, spruce and white pine, silver fir, oak of three kinds, maple, yellow cypress, willow, hemlock, crab, dogwood, poplar, alder, yew, juniper, arbutus, cedar, &c. The Douglas pine is very superior for masts, and the cypress for boats, cabinet and joinery work, close in grain, light and elastic.

There are but two or three saw-mills in the colony; to clear the land, bonfires are made of the magnificent Douglas pine, and the principal use for the cypress is to burn the Indian dead. Great Britain annually imports some 20,000,000 cubic feet of pine from Canada. A small specimen of the Douglas pine may be seen at Kew Gardens, it forms a flagstaff 150 feet high; 250 to 300 feet is a common height. The French Government engineer at Cherbourg, M. Serres, says this wood is superior for its almost complete absence of knots, its resistance is nearly equal to, and its weight a little less than the best in use, and

owing to its great size there is some gain in weight and much saving of material and cost.

Raspberries, strawberries, gooseberries, elder, myrtle, hawthorn and roses are indigenous—also several varieties of agreeable berries and flowering shrubs not generally known in the United Kingdom.

FISH—whales, porpoise, dogfish, salmon, salmon-trout, mountain-trout, sturgeon, halibut, cod, smelt, haddock, lamprey, herring, rock-cod, carp, mullet, oolachan, clams, cockles, muscles, periwinkles, whelks, limpets, cray-fish, crab, prawns, shrimps, oysters.

OILS—The Indians extract hundreds of gallons of oil annually from the whale, porpoise and dogfish. They master the whale with a harpoon attached to a distended sealskin. The quantity of salmon is most enormous; the cod and halibut are abundant; the herring during its season can be scooped into boats with rakes. The oolachan is a fish very similar to smelt, it comes in myriads, is excellent food either fresh or preserved, a gentle heat extracts an oil abundantly, which is far more palatable and possesses all the medicinal properties of cod-liver oil; the Indians use it as butter, and could not live without it, its collection and use are entirely confined to the natives, arising from its virtues being unknown to the civilized world. Since the discovery of gold, curing of fish for export has been neglected. Italian fishermen supply the daily wants of the Victoria market.

GAME—elk, deer, grouse, snipe, duck, cranes, partridges, pigeons, swans, geese, and a great variety of wild fowl.

There is a great variety of the feathered tribe, from eagles to humming-birds, beautiful plumage but little song. Bees have been introduced and they thrive well.

PRINCIPAL TOWN—Victoria (not incorporated), it is the largest town north of San Francisco; population, 4000 to 5000, or about four-fifths of the entire population of the colony. Four years ago it was a trading post of the Hudson Bay Company, and contained about 250 people.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the service which the presence of Her Majesty's vessels has rendered in fostering this now prosperous town; the admiral's advice has been most valuable to the local government, and the officers have been distinguished for their courtesy and abilities. Judicious employment of the vessels has surveyed the neighbouring waters, prevented serious outbreaks of the natives, and established a perfect moral supremacy of the whites over them; at the close of 1858 and during 1859, when the greatest gloom prevailed in Vic-

toria, hope was buoyed up by their presence, and supplying the wants of their numerous crews sustained a great number of its tradesmen.

COST OF LIVING—at Hotels, 30s to 50s. a week; self-found and occupying a room or a shanty, 12s. a-week.

PROVISIONS—cheaper on the average than in England. Such dinners as are given in Paris for 5 francs may be had in Victoria for 4s. 2d.; the ordinary eating houses give soup, fish, a cut from the joint, vegetables, bread, and pudding or pie, for 2s.

Wholesale prices in February, 1862 — Flour, £2 for 200 lbs.; Brown Sugar, 5d. to 9d.; Coffee, 1s. 2d.; Bacon, 8d.; Beans, 4d.; Potatoes, 1d. to 1½d.; Onions, 2½d. per lb.

Horses — Native Scrubs, small and hardy, £10 to £30—Superior American, £30 to £100.

Oxen, £20 to £30 a yoke. *Cows*, £6 to £8. *Sheep*, 16s. to 20s. *Hogs* on foot, 2½d. to 4d. per lb.

WAGES—Mechanics, 12s. to 20s. a-day; Labourers, £10 per month; FemaleDomestics (much wanted) £4 to £6 per month and found.

Advertisements for 1800 men to work on new roads, are in the Victoria papers of April 1862.

RENT—from £1 to £10 per month, for shanties of two rooms to cottages of 6 or 8 rooms, with detached kitchens and gardens.

RENT OF SHOPS — from £3 to £30 a month, according to quality, size and location.

GOVERNMENT PRICE OF LAND is 4s. 2d. per acre payable in three yearly instalments. If not surveyed it can be pre-empted and paid for on its survey—244 pre-emptions recorded up to March 1862.

VEGETABLE MARKET—good—not sufficient produced at present to supply it, much imported.

Agriculture is in a very backward condition from want of settlers; the floating population is large, but it is composed of foreigners who return with their earnings to their own countries. Cattle, sheep, butter, flour, barley, oats, hay, eggs, fruit, poultry, and almost everything eaten, drank, worn or used is imported.

CHURCHES—Church-of-England, Wesleyan Methodist, Catholic, Congregational, Presbyterian, Hebrew—all self-supporting.

SCHOOLS—excellent, numerous—charges very moderate, some all but free; from elementary to highest branches taught.

In Victoria there are Gas Works, an Iron Foundry, Machine shops,

a public library and reading room, two newspapers, two fire companies, a St. Andrew's society, a Freemasons' lodge, a horticultural society, a philharmonic society, a gymnasium, billiard rooms, bowling alley, a jockey club, theatre, and a rifle corps is being formed.

VICTORIA IS A FREE PORT—Vessels of 16 ft. displacement can enter its harbour, those of greater, discharge at Esquimaux. Imports in twelve months, ending July 31st, 1861, were £463,935.

Entered, in six months ending June 30, 1861, 550 vessels, tonnage 53,443, crews 3,523.

Cleared 609 vessels, tonnage 57,398, crews 3,725.

Gold export in 1861, about £500,000—this was the product of British Columbia—very little gold has been obtained on Vancouver. Other exports than to British Columbia, coal, timber, dried fish, furs and assorted merchandise, probably £75,000 to £100,000.

Imports in nine months ending Sept. 30, 1861, £293,502, of which £53,285 were from England. About five-eighths of the imports would be provisions, &c., most advantageously supplied by the neighbouring continent until raised on the island.

Imports during March 1862, were £52,350.

Revenue derived from sale of public lands, a tax on real estate, licenses to trade, harbour dues, supreme court and police, &c.—revenue in 1861, £25,291; expenditure, £22,912.

A reciprocity treaty with the United States would be a great benefit to the people of Vancouver and the continent—the island gives all she has to offer, and asks for some return from her populous neighbour.

A line of economically worked auxiliary screw steam vessels, of about 500 tons. to ply between San Francisco and Victoria, likely to be well supported and subsidized by the colonial government.

Were the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's boats connected with a line of north Pacific boats, it would tend much to increase the business of merchants at home with the colony.

Young men beginning life with a small capital may feel as sure of attaining independence in this colony as at home they are certain to have a hard struggle merely "to make both ends meet." It must be evident that either in coal, copper or iron mining, in farming, fish curing, lumbering, the manufacture of crockery, brewing, or in other branch of industry, Vancouver offers an almost certain reward. Its climate is unsurpassed for invigorating qualities, it possesses a highly productive soil, and what some may deem considerations, it has

most picturesque scenery, and the lakes, streams and woods abound in sport for the angler or shot. The explorer may ramble without dread of wild beasts, nor is he annoyed by mosquitoes, those pests of most new countries.

The Indians can be, and are, with a little management, used as labourers at comparatively low wages—that they are ingenious may be seen by their works on exhibition. As the colony is at present too poor to pay the passages of labourers from home (a thing it would gladly do if able), the natives will occupy their place in a measure. Other sources of probably great profits not yet examined, the collection of turpentine which exudes freely from the Douglas pine—obtaining of salt from numerous strongly impregnated saline springs. Hops grow luxuriantly, but they are not cultivated, all those consumed are imported from California. Manufacture of iodine from unlimited quantities of kelp on the coast. The manufacture of hemp from the abundant hemp nettle, its quality is superior to Russian. There is no tannery, the leather is all imported and the hides exported—as is also the wool, for there is no loom although the consumption of blankets is enormous.

Cost of reaching Victoria by steam from Southampton or Liverpool, 45*l.*, 75*l.* and 100*l.*—length of passage, 45 days. By sailing vessel, 26 guineas; length of passage, about 150 days.

Columbian Emigration Society, for assisting the emigration of industrious women—apply, by letter, to the Rev. John Garrett, or to W. C. Sargeant, Esq., 54, Charing Cross.

The best route is *via* New York and San Francisco, because there is no detention on Panama—cost £45 to £110.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Superficial area about 200,000 square miles, 500 miles long and 400 miles wide (that of England and Wales is 58,320 square miles).

Johnstone Strait, separating on the south west this colony from Vancouver, resembles a fine river studded with islands which are covered with trees.

Interior—extremely mountainous, but there are hundreds of thousands of acres suitable for agriculture and grazing—vast forests—numerous lakes, rapid streams and swamps.

Soil—On the prairies, a rich sandy loam. Price of land, 4s. 2d. an acre payable when surveyed.

In 1861 the population of Whites was about 6000.

Estimated population during the summer of 1862—

Whites—20,000 men, 500 women.

Chinamen—4000 to 10,000.

Indians—10,000 to 15,000.

There are about 50,000 Chinese in California, who expend about £2,800,000 per an. in that country—its labouring population are endeavouring to expel them. The miners of Columbia have been mostly foreigners who naturally prefer their own country, therefore do not settle, and this colony has been nearly depopulated every winter, minus the large amounts of gold obtained by them every summer. Another great cause for this migration is the scarcity of women—nothing appears to settle a man so quickly as a wife, and in this country she is not to be had.

CLIMATE—very salubrious, of various character owing to difference in altitude, latitude and surrounding peculiarities—mining is carried on in Cariboo from June to October; when tunneling commences, it may be pursued through the winter; on the lower Frazer many places have been worked all through the winter months at intervals; at Beaver Lake, in Cariboo, last January, mercury in thermometers congealed whilst exposed to the setting sun.

Agricultural products are similar to those of Vancouver, and command a higher price than in any other country, arising from the paucity of farmers and the high price of freight, duties, &c.

PRICES, at a good farm, 60 miles from Cariboo, in summer of 1861—Vegetables, 4d.; Hay, 4d.; Barley and Oats, 1s. 2d. per lb.—in Cariboo, Vegetables, 1s.; Barley, 1s. 8d.; Hay, 1s.; Oats, 2s; Butter, 6s.; Beef, 1s. 8d.; Flour and Bacon, 2s. 11d. per lb. The nearer to Victoria, the cheaper to live.

Port of entry—New Westminster, 80 miles from Victoria and 15 miles from the mouth of Frazer River—population, 300 to 500—it contains the custom-house, a bonded warehouse, the mint, treasury, and a pretty episcopal church; three or four miles higher up the river there is a village, which is the head quarters of a company of Royal Engineers under Lieut.-Gov. Col. R. C. Moody, R.E.

A SIMPLE FACT—Gold Digging in this country “a lottery without blanks and the prizes are indeed splendid.” Five men in two months

obtained 20,000*l.* One claim yielded 1,700 oz. (about 5,440*l.*) in three days. The average yield of gold to each miner was, last year, 10*l.* a-week, this far exceeds that of any other gold mining population. Extent of the gold fields unknown. It should require but little consideration to cause any one to believe that want is absent in these colonies, where labour is so handsomely remunerated, and the demand for it is almost unlimited, neither does it seem reasonable to doubt, that with industry and ordinary prudence, a young man may render himself comparatively independent in a few years.

During the past year there were two routes to Cariboo, both from New Westminster, distance about 500 miles, and the cost was £8 to £10. This season there will be two others, each of them apparently preferable to those used hitherto. One of the new roads commences at the Bentinck Arm and its length to Alexandria is estimated to be 232 miles—54 river navigation and 178 land travel. On the Bellacola River, which empties into this Arm, a town called Bellacola is forming rapidly. A Miner walked on snow shoes from Cariboo to this Settlement in 11 days during last February.

The other new road leads from the Bute Inlet, it is stated to be nearly 20 miles shorter than that from the Arm, and has only 158 miles of land carriage. The distance of Bute Inlet from Victoria is about 222 miles whilst the Bentinck Arm is some 500 miles. A few months will decide which of these routes is the better one. Indians were packing 100 lbs each at 4*d.* per lb. from the Bentinck Arm to Alexandria, and the whole freight from Victoria to that town was reckoned at 5*d.* per lb., this will materially lessen the cost of living in Cariboo.

The government and people of this colony have shown extraordinary energy in forming roads to its interior.

Cost of living in the richest mines—8*s.* to 12*s.* a day (if cooking for yourself.) Restaurant keepers charge from 4*s.* 2*d.* to 8*s.* 4*d.* a meal.

WAGES in them, 20*s.* to 40*s.* a day. In peculiar cases double or treble these amounts may be paid—most men prefer working for themselves—no other qualifications are necessary for a miner than ability to work and live on coarse food—no want of appetite likely.

Capital—safely and most profitably employed, 12 per cent. per annum regarded as is 3 per cent. in England (small but secure).

For further information, see "Cariboo," published by Darton & Co., 58, Holborn Hill; "Handbook to B. C. and Vancouver Island," by F. Algar, 11, Clement's Lane, Lombard Street, E.C.; and especially "The Gold Fields of British Columbia," by the Correspondent of *The Times*, Rixon & Arnold, 29, Poultry; his letters in its issues of Sept. 20, 1861, and 5th and 6th Feb. 1862; and the Blue Book for British Columbia, part 4.